

## THE CUSTOM-HOUSE, ROUEN.

THE Custom-house at Rouen, situated, as some of our readers will recollect, on the quay, towards the south, was built from the designs of Mons. Edouard Isabelle, of Paris. It was commenced in 1835, and completed in 1848. The annexed engraving is a geometrical representation of the entrance front. The doorway is a striking feature, and the rustication exceedingly bold and effective. The sculptured figures are about 8 feet high.

## WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH OUR DEAD?

As it is to be feared lest the retreat of the pestilence from the country should be the signal for the retreat of all thoughts of the odious practice of burying in towns and churches from the public mind, it is the duty of every one that has the opportunity to endeavour to keep the attention of the public so fixed upon this subject, as to insure a reformation. Now, it appears to me that we have not made sufficient use of antiquity in this matter, for had we glanced backward at the practice of our forefathers, I think we should not have had reason to deplore the existence (in our midst) of so many "consecrated cesspools." The poliest nations of antiquity had two distinct modes of treating the dead, viz., burning and embalming, the first of which was practised by the refined Greeks, and by them imparted to the Romans; and the second was and is, I believe, to this day the custom of the Egyptian, the Persian, and the Jew. We also note another circumstance, which is, that the Romans, who at one part of their history buried the dead, had laws to prevent this being done within the precincts of the city; and from what we know of the other nations, the rites of sepulture appear to have invariably been performed "without the walls." We cannot, therefore, find anything in antiquity to act as a precedent to our present practice. In this the ancients were wiser than we. They saw the evils arising from intramural burial, and recognized from the beginning, what we have at last felt, that there is a bad air engendered by the decomposed bodies of the dead, which, if enclosed within the circumscribed space of a city burial-ground, will possess sufficient malignity to induce disease; and therefore it was that they burned or buried their dead in the open country. At last having, as I have said, felt this, we know it to be true, and therefore are beginning to cry out for cemeteries and country burials, and would place the bodies of the dead in the ground, amid country scenes and air, where the gases might have space enough so to disseminate as to lose their death-giving pungency. This is a decided improvement in the feelings of our countrymen, and will doubtless lead to much that is good in the practice of burying; but for my own part, Sir, I cannot see why the more wholesome practice of burning the dead should not be again revived: indeed it would be a hard matter to give any reason why it should have been discontinued. I know that the above sentence will meet with much opposition from the fastidious, who, with abhorrence strongly marked in their faces, will doubtless cry, "How shockingly inhuman a practice," and will, *sans doute*, set me down as a great barbarian for saying that I like it. Let me ask them, however, why it is that they prefer the element of earth to that of fire? Is it because the latter is so quick and clean in its destructions? Verily, I, for my own part, should look forward with far more pleasant thoughts to a sepulture amid flames, than to a spot in any of our over-crowded grounds, and would as soon commit a friend's dead body to the quick consuming element of fire, as to the mouldering element of earth, with its attendant, the slowly-devouring worm. Aye; and I will say sooner, for let it be observed that in the latter case my dead friend might, if I lived near his resting-place, be the death of me, whereas, in the former there could be nothing of this kind to fear. I would, then, instead of having cemeteries made in the outskirts of London, which, look you, may in time become intramural, and must at any rate soon surround with the circle of death the habitations of the

living—light up once more the funeral torch, and again kindle the funeral pile, and would do this in a place set apart for the purpose in the country. By this means the dead would be far more speedily and healthily reduced to ashes than they at present are. Whether we alter our mode of sepulture or not, we must at once alter the places. Town burials must be at once abolished, and all town burial-grounds at once and for ever closed. The mere closing them from further additions is not sufficient; there has been enough added this summer of itself to breed a pestilence next. Cholera may not be contagious amid the living, but I should think that, of all things, the gas escaping from the decomposed bodies of persons that have died of that disease is most likely to impart it to the living who imbibe it. To prevent this, it is necessary first to give our burial-grounds a layer of some disinfecting material, and after that to cover it with concrete or asphalt. Economy must be thought of; but let no niggardliness prevent the people of London from doing that which may avert from us another visitation of the pestilence, which is now departing; and, moreover, it will not do to pay too much attention to the interests of the few,—these must succumb to the health of the many.

LE FAY.

## RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

A WOODEN station, of a wretched description, it is said, has been provided by the North Midland Company for Bingley, a town containing 7,000 inhabitants. "It consists," says a contemporary, "of a clerk's room, about three yards square at one end, a small open shed in the middle, and at the other end a room similar to the clerk's, dignified with the name of the 'Ladies' waiting-room.' During wet weather the clerks transact business with umbrellas over their heads, to protect themselves from the rain dropping through the roof. In the open shed are buddled together 1st, 2nd, and 3rd class male and female passengers, sometimes for nearly an hour, exposed to all kinds of weather. 'The Ladies' waiting-room' is avoided from the dread of cholera, for the stench arising from the conveniences, only separated by thin boards, is dreadful." The era of railway economy seems to be superseding that of extravagance with a vengeance—all allowance here, for probable exaggeration, to the contrary, notwithstanding.—A more excusable instance, it may be, of real economy appears in the reduction of salary effected in the appointment of a traffic manager on the York and North Midland, at 300*l.* a-year, in place of Mr. Hudson's *étire* at 1,200*l.* There were 137 applicants for the reduced rate of income.—We regret to learn that the scheme for removing the Chinese Exhibition by rail to Edinburgh, already described, was not altogether successful,—indeed, an alleged, but, we should think, somewhat over-estimated damage, to the extent of 1,500*l.* to 2,000*l.*, was occasioned by the striking of two of the vans on a bridge near Berwick, and the crushing of their contents thereby. The rails had been altered, too, so as to allow of the train passing right under the crown of the arch, but it was scarcely to be expected that vans of so unusual a size should safely pass through railway arches, which are but too often reduced to such close cutting and dangerous dimensions, that a railway guard himself often dares not stretch his neck even a very little beyond the breadth of his train without the imminent risk of having his brains dashed out—a catastrophe which has actually more than once occurred.—The Railway Clearing House Committee, at which all the leading railway companies are represented by their chairman or other delegate, have, it appears, at the suggestion of Capt. Huish, urged upon the railway companies the importance of giving facilities for the guards walking safely along trains when in motion, by which means, as we have long and perseveringly pointed out, a great variety of accidents may be averted. The Railway Commissioners, in 1847, themselves adopted it, out of a multitude of other suggestions, as the system of communication best promising success. It is to be hoped that it will now be generally carried out. In the event of a carriage or truck catching fire, of an axle heating, a door flying open, a cry of help from

a carriage, from whatever cause arising, or in any case where there may be even a suspicion that something is wrong, the guard should be able to get to any part of a train at once.—It has been suggested that there is great need of accommodation for invalids in a reclined position, while on the way to hospitals, &c., for medical assistance, or surgical operation as on fractured limbs. Even independent of humanity as an object, doubtless the additional traffic in transfer of invalids, to towns not otherwise reachable for medical advice, would well repay all the little expense of fitting up a carriage or two for such a purpose. On American lines there are sofas, or seats for reclining on, even for the use of passengers limb-free, and in perfect health.—The general specification lately issued of stores required by the London and North-Western for 1850, shows the vast amount of materials required for working the traffic of this the most important railway in the world. The "specification" extends over 25 pages of foolscap, and particularizes the stations at which the required amounts of stores are to be delivered. Of "brass and brass work" 352 cwt. of castings are required; 144 gross of screws and 59 tons of locomotive tubes. Of "copper" 4,966 lb. of bolts from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch diameter, 11,200 lb. of sheet of various thicknesses and dimensions, and 12,765 lb. for fire-boxes  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick. Of "coal" 15,104 tons. Of "crucibles for moulding brass," 2,539. Of "colours, dry-salt," 110,000 leaves of gold leaf. Of "iron and iron-works," 35 tons of axle-guards, 50 tons of patent shaft bar-iron, 190 tons of fire bar-iron, 424 tons of bolts, 13 tons of nuts, 102 tons of castings, 48 tons Lammoor or Howling iron, 100 cwt. of nails, 69 cwt. of rivets, 6,360 gross of screws, 1,343 tons Staffordshire iron, and 120 tons Yorkshire iron. Of "timber and wood work," the Company require tenders for 19,367 feet of alder planks, 145 loads of beech planks, 10,000 feet of baywood boards, 91,000 feet of deal boards, &c.

## NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

ST. MICHAEL'S Church, Cambridge, has been considerably injured by fire. The congregation were assembling on Sunday morning last, when smoke was observed to be issuing from the roof on the south side. The building was speedily vacated, and the fire broke forth through the slates and raged with great fury. The workmen acted like men at the buckets and engines, and the destruction was at length arrested. The roof was totally destroyed. Some damage was also done to the organ in removing the pipes and by the play of the engines. Nearly 1,000*l.*, it is estimated, will be necessary for repairs. The building is not insured, but there is a small fund for repairs, though much exhausted of late. The accident is attributed to negligence in repairing flues and stoves.—A new church has been erected at Newgate-street hamlet, Hatfield, at the expense of Mr. Mills, of Tolmers. It is called St. Mary's, and is a small building in the Pointed style, without pews, and has a stained-glass window over a gallery.—In removing some old panelling at the south end of Norwich Grammar School, a piscina has been discovered. The style is Early English. Mr. Nibham, of Norwich, has executed a drawing of it. The work of purification has also disclosed several heads and foliage, &c., in the capitals of the arches.—The new corn exchange to be erected at Brigg, was contracted for on Thursday week. Several tenders were offered, but the one accepted was that of Mr. Margisson, builder, Hull, at 1,227*l.*: difference between highest and lowest offer, some 320*l.* The site selected is at the back of the "Angel" inn.—On 24th ult., the parish church of St. Candida, of Whitechurch Canonry, Dorset, was reopened, after having undergone extensive repair and restoration, under the direction of Mr. Butler, of Chichester, including the rebuilding of the north aisle, roofed with English oak covered with lead, and affording 100 additional sittings, the restoration of the stonework and tracery of twenty windows, some of large dimensions, and the erection of additional sittings in solid oak. The old seating has been reduced in height, and the seats throughout are open. Amongst